

## **LEWISTON TRIBUNE**

### **FFA students put their backs into the fair**

By JODI WALKER  
of the Tribune

NEZPERCE -- There is nothing easy about giving a 1,000-pound steer a bath.

But it will be a little easier this year at the Lewis County Fair with the new stockades built and installed by the Nezperce High School FFA.

"It's something I had been thinking about for a couple years," said Kyle Stapleton, adviser of the group.

The livestock events will be just some of the activities at the Lewis County Fair, which runs through Sunday in Nezperce. The weekend culminates with the combine demolition derby Sunday afternoon.

The metal pipe wash station will allow participants to tie their steers up and wash them in an area clear of other animals. Historically the animals were washed among hogs and sheep.

"I was afraid someone was going to get killed in there," said Bob Pratt, the former FFA adviser.

"Last year (the fair board) asked for a plan, then they gave us the metal to build it," said Michael Brannon, 17, sentinel of the FFA chapter.

The wash station is one of many upgrades the FFA chapter has brought to the fairgrounds over the years.

New hog pens still were in pieces in the school shop Wednesday morning, awaiting installation later in the day. The students also built picnic tables for the fair building.

"I think they've done a great job," Stapleton said. "We have some kids who are fairly dedicated.

In years passed, the students built a hog watering system and the wash station for the hogs.

The FFA chapter is 28 members strong, nearly half the student body.

Many of those took time out last weekend to donate time to fixing up the livestock building.

Most of the members are raising animals for the fair, although most of them take the project through 4-H.

"I hate competing against 4-H," Stapleton said. "For me, it's all the same thing."

He said he encourages the students to be involved in 4-H, too.

"That's one thing about kids around here, they are involved in everything."

Larissa Inglet, 15, treasurer of the FFA chapter, is finishing the first horse project to go through the chapter.

"FFA is a lot more formal," she said of the in-depth record-keeping and showmanship requirements.

When the fair isn't going, the FFA students are busy participating in other aspects of FFA. They have been working on a schedule of competitions and shows to attend, said Cody Howard, 16, president of the chapter.

The chapter has grown and evolved over the years, Pratt said. It used to be that only boys were involved, but now four of the six officers are girls.

"We just try to have a lot of fun and that gets more kids involved," Stapleton said.

It is also good to see them donate time to activities like the Lewis County Fair.

"In such a small town we are always asking, asking, asking (for donations) now it's time to give back."

Pratt said he hopes the students will be able to come back with their own kids and see the benefit of the work they did.

"It is an organization out there doing something without our hands out."

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